

EX PARTE report of Visit by Brierfield Consulting, Inc to FCC

On 10 July 2003, Adelle Simpson and Marilyn Fox of Brierfield Consulting, Inc. (BCI) visited the FCC to speak with Calvin Osborne and Nancy Stevenson of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau regarding information services offered to consumers in the USA. First, BCI reviewed comments made pursuant to the 96-146 inquiry into the modification of the FCC's pay-per-call rules. BCI noted that none of the telecom billing companies had made comments and proposed that this happened because those companies were not aware of the comment period. BCI noted that in its Biennial Review the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau had listed the purpose of Part 64, subpart O (implementing Section 228 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended) has the purpose of promoting legitimate pay-per-call services and protecting consumers from fraudulent or unscrupulous provision of pay-per-call services. BCI then noted that it appears that while consumers are being protected from misuse of pay-per-call services, the pay-per-call business is being allowed to die. The reasons for the demise of pay-per-call services were attributed to a lack of requirements for CLEC's, Wireless Carriers and Broadband Providers to offer pay-per-call services as well as the ease with which consumers can refuse to pay valid pay-per-call charges. The FCC said that these issues would be addressed in its report on 96-146.

BCI also introduced the concept of international premium rate service (IPRS) as defined by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). BCI noted that currently the USA has no federal regulation that applies to IPRS and requested that the FCC investigate how the service can be regulated. Also, BCI noted that IPRS is defined as part of international direct distance telephone by the ITU and therefore one could conceivably file a tariff for the service under existing guidelines. Therefore, BCI asked how it could introduce a new service like IPRS to the USA via the FCC. The FCC agreed to review the question and get back to BCI.